

to special interests. That was voted down, on a virtually party-line vote.

At that time, the majority leader indicated that he intended to take up this legislation by the end of May, or sometime in May.

Then I came back with a sense-of-the-Senate resolution which would have simply put the Senate on record saying that we will take this up by the end of May. That too was voted down. I said, wait a minute. The majority leader just said that he intended to do this, so let's put the whole Senate on record that by May we will have this legislation back on the floor for full consideration. Let us have a vote to affirm what the majority leader had just said was his intention, because I just had this sort of feeling that people were going to continue to delay and delay, as had been done in the past.

Mr. President, let me just be clear. Now it is May and nothing has happened; zero, zippo, nada, nothing has happened. No hearings have been held. No bills have been introduced. Nothing to my knowledge on the gift ban legislation is scheduled for floor consideration any time soon.

So the question is: Where is the majority party on this issue, where are the Republicans with their version of gift reform? Since 37 Republicans, including the majority leader, already cosponsored at the end of last year the same provisions that we offered in January and will offer again, as I said, as soon as we have an appropriate vehicle on the floor, what changes do they intend to make in this bill? Do they intend again, as some did last year—to try to gut the provisions of the charitable vacation travel to golf and tennis hot spots like Vail, Aspen, Florida, or the Bahamas where Members are wine and dined as guests of lobbyists and other special interests? Because, if they intend to try to gut those provisions, we intend for there to be a major debate. We cannot pass something saying we are not going to take gifts with these huge gaping holes and loopholes.

Do they intend again to try to hollow out gift ban reforms by just slightly lowering the thresholds for expensive meals, sports tickets, and other gifts paid for by special interests here in Washington so that they can say they are for reform? That would be symbolic politics at its worst.

Let me just simply say to you, Mr. President, this is an idea whose time has come, and come, and come again. I have been working on this for just over 2 years now, and the real standard for gift ban reform is a tightened-up bill that Senator LEVIN and I, Senator FEINGOLD and Senator LAUTENBERG, put forth in January. We will come to the floor and we will offer tough gift ban legislation. I believe the overwhelming majority of Senators, Democrats and Republicans alike, should support it. We really have had extensive bipartisan support in some overwhelming votes for this legislation. But each time along the way somebody

or some group of Senators figures out a way of sidetracking it.

The time is long past due for this reform. I think people in this country really are in a reform mood. And any Senator or Representative who believes that campaign finance reform or lobby disclosure or gift ban is just something that so-called good government groups are interested in, they are wrong. People want us to represent them well. They want this political process to be open and accountable. And many people, too many people, believe, and unfortunately I think they are right, that too few people have too much access to Senators and Representatives, and too many people, the vast majority of people, are left out of the decisionmaking loop, left out of the equation.

It is really time to get back to this reform agenda and finish up our work in this area. There are three critical parts, all of which I intend to one way or another help bring to the floor of the Senate for debate. One is campaign finance reform. That is fundamental. Another is the lobby disclosure, on which Senator LEVIN has taken a key leadership role. The other is the gift ban, where I will continue to work with Senators LEVIN, LAUTENBERG, FEINGOLD, and others.

I look forward to that debate. We will have that amendment out here on the floor soon and I think people in the country, whether they are Democrats, Republicans, or Independents, will hold us accountable.

I look forward to this debate. I look forward to this vote. I urge my colleagues to support our tough, sweeping gift ban legislation. I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, in his capacity as a Senator from the State of Vermont, asks unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded. And without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS UNTIL 12:30 P.M.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, in his capacity as a Senator from the State of Vermont, asks unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess until the hour of 12:30 p.m. today.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 11:36 p.m., recessed until 12:30 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. GRAMS).

COMMONSENSE PRODUCT LIABILITY AND LEGAL REFORM ACT

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill.

Pending:

Gorton Amendment No. 596, in the nature of a substitute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The pending question is the Gorton amendment numbered 596 to the bill H.R. 956.

In my capacity as a Senator from Minnesota, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I might proceed for 15 minutes as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. President, I thank the Chair.

TWO U.S. SENATORS

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. President, I just want to say a few words about two U.S. Senators, one recently deceased and one recently embarked on a spirited new part of life, both of them dear friends of mine—Senator John Stennis of Mississippi and Senator DAVID PRYOR of Arkansas.

SENATOR JOHN C. STENNIS

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. President, Senator Stennis served with my father in the U.S. Senate. My father, Milward L. Simpson of Wyoming, served here from 1962 until 1966. He was a former Governor of Wyoming from 1954 until 1958, then came to the U.S. Senate, elected to fulfill a 4-year term, or remaining 4-year term, of a young man who had been elected to the Senate and died before he was sworn in. John Stennis and Mrs. Stennis immediately greeted my father when he came here in the most cordial way. They were very dear friends of my parents.

I must say that the philosophy of the western Senator, my father, and the southern gentleman, the Senator from Mississippi, were much the same with regard to national defense, fiscal matters, issues of substance in the social area, of the fabric of the country, and they became fast friends. I recall very distinctly my father called John Stennis "Mr. Integrity."

My father invited John Stennis, Senator Willis Robertson, and two other persons to Wyoming. I recall very distinctly. I was a young man practicing law in Cody, WY, and they asked me to join them. Dad took his two Senate friends fishing. You might imagine that John had not ever seen too much of Rocky Mountain trout fishing nor the attire that accompanies such activities. I will never forget him coming from his cabin, very nattily dressed, and he said, "Milward, is this what we

wear when we fish for these trout?" My father said, "No, I think we need something more than that, something a little different." Off they went to enjoy a remarkable 2 days together.

My father loved John Stennis, and when my father was the recipient of the Milward L. Simpson Chair of Political Science at the University of Wyoming, John Stennis served as his honorary chairman, and said, "If there is anything I can do for my friend, Milward Simpson, I will do it." So it was a great affection and relationship, a true friendship. Then when I, of course, came to the Senate, John Stennis was the first to greet me. He said, "If there is anything I can do to help you or smooth your path here, let me do it." And he did.

He was more than charitable, kind, and attentive to me except, of course, when I tried to kill off the Tennessee Tombigbee Waterway. Then there was a definite strain in our relationship—momentary, fleeting. But he said, "ALAN, I cannot believe that you would do that." And he was right. I did not believe I could, and did not. That great waterway is a great tribute to personally the perseverance of John Stennis.

But what he told me—and I shall never forget—he said "ALAN, I have been watching you." I had been here maybe 4 years at the time. "I have seen you work. I know how hard you work." He really buoyed me up. He said, "You want to remember something in the Senate." He said, "People come here, and some grow and some swell." I shall never forget the phrase. "Some grow and some swell." Indeed, we know both categories. I think I have done a little of both. But when I did swell, I was put down a peg or two, to get back to growing instead of swelling.

So I want to just pay tribute to John Stennis, and I know my dear parents, both gone, too, would have wanted me to pay tribute to a very dear and lovely friend, and to his memory, which will certainly be present in this Chamber for the remainder of time. He was deeply loved, a man of great stature, and truly a wonderful gentleman, truly a gentleman.

So God bless his son and his daughter who survive him. They have a wonderful heritage.

SENATOR DAVID PRYOR

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. President, let me just say a word about my friend, DAVID PRYOR.

DAVID PRYOR has determined that he will now retire from the Senate, and we came here together. We came here in the class of 1978. There was a class of 20, the largest class ever to come into the U.S. Senate at one time, 11 Republicans and 9 Democrats. We were very close. Those of us who are still here are still very close. In fact, in January of this year, the remaining group of us met together and had dinner together with our spouses, and shared the attitude of how can we make the place

work a little better instead of just chopping ourselves to pieces, as we sometimes do. But that goes with the territory. That is politics. It was always a little rough and tumble, and it still will be, and ever shall be, world without end.

But DAVID PRYOR and Barbara—and there is a remarkable woman. She has chosen to take a little of a secondary role in the life of this wonderful man. Let me tell you, she is in every sense as much a part of DAVID's success in life and fiber as my own wife, Ann, is of mine.

So DAVID and I came here, and I was placed in the basement of the Russell Building because it was thought that I was No. 100. Well, the senior Senator from Wyoming had resigned an hour before the deadline of midnight of the New Year. So I was not 100; I was No. 88, which was a significant leapfrog. We have since changed that. We do not do that anymore. But nevertheless, thinking I was No. 100, they placed me in the basement of the Russell Building, with bars on the windows, which were not unfamiliar to me from some of my activities in youth. But, nevertheless, it looked like the sewers of Paris down in there.

But I was glad to have any kind of opportunity to be here, thrilled as we all are, and hope always will be, or we shall get out. DAVID PRYOR, who I had come to know in those early days, came to visit me in my dungeon surroundings, the durance vile. He said, "This is quite an office you have here." I said, "It is. But at least I am here." He said, "You need something to brighten it up." I said, "Well, that would be lovely. I think you are right." So later in the afternoon he mailed to me, hand carried by courier, a dead plant with the leaves dangling in grotesque, yellowish brown fashion. He said he thought that the plant matched the surroundings of what I had there. And then he later showed up personally to assure himself that I had received this beautiful plant to grace my new surroundings.

Well, that is part of DAVID. He is a wonderful friend, and he is a very serious man. He comes to this floor, and he defends his friend, his principal friend, who is a man named Bill Clinton, President of the United States. I used to come to this floor and defend my friend, a man I had known for 35 years named George Bush, President of the United States. And DAVID and I have often laughed at how it is when you are a close friend of a President, because when somebody is here tearing them up, your staff says, "Get over there; they are doing something bad," and you end up dropping what you do and you come over to defend your friend. I have done that with George Bush, and I have seen DAVE do it with great loyalty for his friend Bill Clinton.

I have always admired him. I have worked with him. There is not a finer, more principled man, a man of remarkable honesty and directness, and a man to whom I once said, "DAVID, did you

run for president of the first grade? Because I don't think you have missed any part of politics. I think you have been in this since your birth." When you look at the public record that he leaves behind as a legislator, as a member of the Arkansas Assembly, a Congressman, a Governor, a Senator, the people of Arkansas love this man, and he could have been here as long as he wished. He has decided, however, to do something many, many of us think about more and more often, and that is stepping away, not with irritation or hostility or angst or anguish, just knowing that there are other things to do in life, stepping away just as a person such as Jack Danforth of Missouri—no regret, no recrimination, just stepping away.

That is what DAVID has chosen to do, and I just want to say that I wish him well. And he will do well. He looks spirited and relieved and released, had a snappy tan to his face, lilt to his step the other day—he had gone golfing, a shocking revelation.

And so to DAVID and to Barbara, special people of special depth, special substance and sensitivity, and their children, David, Jr., Mark, and Scott, who are great friends of our daughter Susan—they grew up together here in Washington—to DAVID and Barbara Pryor, with whom we have shared much, spent time together, talked of things much deeper than legislation, I say Godspeed. I join in wishing them well in a new chapter of their lives which will be very, very fulfilling to them, I am sure, knowing the type of people they are.

I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COVERDELL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS UNTIL 1:50 P.M.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, and my colleagues who are not on the floor but are probably in their offices, we are waiting for an amendment to be drafted. It may be another 15 to 30 minutes. Rather than have the Senate in session, I will move in a second that we recess for 30 minutes.

It is our hope to have an amendment prepared on which we will vote Monday, followed by a cloture vote on Tuesday. We are trying to reach that agreement, and right now they are in the process of drafting the amendment.

I move that we stand in recess until 1:50.

The motion was agreed to.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1:16 p.m., recessed until 1:51 p.m.; whereupon, the